



Nation

Volume 12, No. 05 • January 21, 2005

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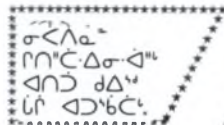
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Innocence lost

By Steve Bonspiel

One of the saddest chapters in the history of the Cree Nation came to a partial close January 11, when Trevor Spencer was sentenced to 54 months in jail – which actually translates to 32 months after time already served is taken into consideration.

Unfortunately, Khayden Otter-Rupert, the little boy he savagely beat with a stick, will live with the affects of the abuse for the rest of his life. With partial paralysis on his right side, and unable to walk straight, he will one day ask why is he different from other children. What did he do to deserve this?

The answer is nothing.

I wish I could tell Khayden when he is old enough to understand that the man who did this to him has serious problems and none of it was Khayden's fault.

Unfortunately, the weight of what happened will eventually weigh down on him. Let's hope he's strong enough and that, along with his family, he is able to get through what will almost surely be a hard time once again.

I had mixed emotions about Spencer's sentencing. It's good that he's still in jail and won't serve his sentence in a halfway house and return in six months to Waswanipi like his lawyer had requested.

But on the other hand he's only going to serve another 32 months at the most for a crime he committed while holding a title, as Khayden's foster father, that he never deserved.

He had a history of alcohol abuse and two previous convictions that

amply demonstrated his penchant for violence.

While many important social issues face the Cree people every day, child abuse or neglect should be a higher priority.

The outpouring of support for Khayden in all nine communities was nothing short of a miracle.

My question is why does it take a highly publicized case for some people to want to change their ways? Shouldn't we always love and respect our children?

Don't get me wrong; I believe that the majority of people in Eeyou Istchee take good care of their kids, but those who aren't good parents now know they have eyes watching them more closely.

But for how long? What kind of real changes are going to be made within the communities?

Some people don't fully realize that the children are the future of the Cree Nation.

When everyone here at the *Nation* first learned about what happened to Khayden we weren't sure how to react. Some reacted with anger, others didn't know how to react.

Now, 11 months after the fact, we still feel a lump in our throats when the little guy's name comes up.

There have been rumblings within Waswanipi about a petition to make sure Spencer never sets foot back in Waswanipi again.

I think this is an idea that should be put into motion. How safe would you feel if a convicted child abuser comes into your town to live?

Contents

editorial

Innocence Lost 3

rez notes

Snowtrax 4

news

Johnny Cooper 5

Trevor Spencer Sentenced 7

In Brief 9

articles

When is a Cree
not Allowed to be a Cree? 10

Will on the Grill 15

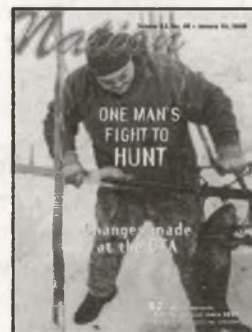
Pulse of the Nation 17

I Remember 19

on the cover

Hunter and Trapper
Gary Webb at Work

Photos: W. Nicholls
Design: M. Laviolette



Snowtrax

Sonny Orr

One of the many things that we enjoy is the fact that in the North, snow is around for about eight months of the year. Another true fact is that it gets damn cold, yet it is an important time for people of the north. I happen to like using snowmobiles, zooming around town, going out to check snares or traps and picking off ptarmigan with my trusty .22 (some guys cheat and use shotguns). Still, winter lovers are balanced by the ones who cannot stand the cold or short daylight hours, usually spent indoors in front of the boob tube or computer.

Why is it an important time? Well, for one thing, you don't need roads to get where you want, as the entire territory is accessible by snowmobile (for the lazy ones like me) or by snowshoe (for those who still have the stamina and the muscles to boot). Tracks of animals are a lot easier to see and to establish their whereabouts, making our traditional foods easier to find.

Kids seem to really like playing shinny on the road or sliding downhill at breakneck speed, causing parents to scream at them until they are hoarse from the cold dry air. Sometimes it gets so cold, that the exhaust expelled from your lungs immediately freezes into ice crystals and falls to the ground, but I have yet to witness that phenomenon.

However, one of the biggest thrills is to get on a snow machine and travel wherever you want. In Quebec, snow trails are made for the rookie rider throughout the province, extending as far as James Bay communities. Only one problem with that scenario is that you have to comply with laws and regulations to even use the well

groomed trails or face fines and some form of punishment. Many of our people do not use helmets, since they are considered to be more of a hindrance rather than a safety mechanism. I don't bother with helmets as I am naturally hard headed and can take crashes up to 100 kilometres per hour, as long as there is snow to soften the blow, I'll be okay.

Skiing is another sport that southerners partake in, usually either in the Laurentians or the Himalayas, but donning skis to get around is a rarity up here, usually carried out by skin tight clad goggled humans, who seem to make the sport an easy exercise. But I understand that it takes nearly all your muscles, so I guess that for me, that would mean I would probably last a few metres of exhausting effort.

I understand that at the time of this writing, Montreal is enjoying a balmy plus 13, while we still chatter the teeth and ache the bones until spring comes around again. Our brethren cousins, the Inuit, have many, many words for snow. But I have only three: white, cold and yellow, the latter created only by the brave. On many occasions, life in winter is an enjoyable one, and after the last snowfall, it's like someone came by with a broom and swept away all signs of human activity, leaving only a pristine view worthy of the best postcard in the world. This is the life we love and winter can be taken with either aspirin or hot toddy to ward off the cold or flu, depending on your taste or doctor. I prefer both. Where else in the world can you say (with pride) that I'm going for a snowmobile ride in June?



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BOARD REMOVES C.T.A. PRESIDENT FROM OFFICE

BY NORMAN FIREMAN



Ex-CTA President Johnny Cooper

photo by Cultural Dept. of Waswanipi

Citing a lack of leadership, the Cree Trappers Association board of directors voted to fire CTA President Johnny Cooper December 9.

Cooper says he is stunned by the decision "I didn't feel too happy," he told the Nation. "It wasn't a very good Christmas gift."

CTA Director Donald Gilpin, who has been appointed to sit on the executive committee, said Cooper didn't fulfill his duties in accordance with the by-laws.

"[Cooper] did not exercise leadership expected of him," Gilpin said. "He was never present at the main office in Eastmain. And there wasn't enough involvement in meetings and he was always absent."

Gilpin also said there wasn't enough consultation with the board of directors: "He didn't implicate himself with the staff, and as president of the executive he did not refer to the board for decisions, trips, approvals, communications and orientation. His lack of interest and implication for management of the organization is a key question too, the board felt his lack of attendance at the regional office executive meetings and lack of communications with the staff at the regional and local levels justifies this decision that was made."

COOPER ACKNOWLEDGES
RECEIVING A LETTER
CONTAINING 32 REASONS
WHY HE SHOULD BE REMOVED
AS PRESIDENT.

Cooper acknowledges receiving a letter containing 32 reasons why he should be removed as president. But he thinks the reasons are a smoke screen. "None of them related to any serious allegations or management issues like financial mismanagement," Cooper said. "I feel the old guard is trying to flex muscle. I don't take it hard but on the day that happened I was stunned."

Though Cooper respects the decision it's hard for him to accept. "There are procedures to go through when you have to remove an employee, you don't just wake up one day and say to the guy, 'Hey! We just fired you by vote,'" said Cooper.

Gilpin says Cree trappers from all the Cree communities were dissatisfied with Cooper's lack of attendance at CTA meetings. "It was

hard for us directors to work efficiently without a strong leadership," Gilpin said. "So that's why the people made a decision to remove the C.T. A. president. We had to do it. That was our mandate from the board."

The next C.T.A. election is scheduled for August 2005.

When asked about his future plans Cooper said he wants to stay on the local C.T.A. committee and spend time out on the land. "I'll go and help my dad with his trap line. He's 72 now, so I want to be there with him."



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Trevor Spencer sentenced to 54 months in prison

Trial of foster father who assaulted Khayden Otter-Rupert finally ends

by Steve Bonspiel

Khayden Otter can rest easy for the next 32 months - Trevor Spencer can't hurt him behind bars.

In a half-filled Waswanipi courtroom, Spencer was sentenced to four and a half years in a federal penitentiary - minus 22 months already served pending trial.

Many Waswanipi residents, most of whom do not wish to speak on the record, feel the sentence is too light.

His grandfather was one of them. "When something happens to a child the law is very lenient," said Ronnie Otter. "I think they should have a stricter law, a different law for [crimes against] children."



Khayden Otter

Khayden is still recovering and has not regained full mobility on his right side. But doctors are amazed he's even walking.

"Khayden is too young to remember what happened, but there will come a day, maybe when he's a teenager, when he will ask why he can't move his hand or why his smile is crooked"

The incident occurred February 8, 2004. It brought the Cree Nation together and served as a catalyst for people to change the way they deal with their children - and the way they view outsiders.

Court documents showed that Khayden had suffered severe head trauma caused by two blows to the head with a stick. He spent seven months away from home after falling into a coma and being flown to a Montreal hospital.

Khayden's story had a profound effect on everyone who met him or heard about him.

During his tour to thank people in the communities, many Elders saw amazing strength in the little guy.

People commented on how he held himself and lit up a room with his



Trevor Spencer

crooked smile.

At least one resident even named her child, who was born in December, after Khayden.

A month after the incident, all nine communities held a walk against violence to show support for the Otter and Rupert families and to let the rest of Canada know that they weren't going to stand idly by while their children were left unprotected.

"He's [Spencer] going to suffer more pain when he leaves this earth, not by a judge, but by God," said Otter, who is deeply religious. "This guy has 32 months left to serve, but my grandson has to suffer this permanent handicap for the rest of his life."

Spencer will serve his sentence in an as-yet undetermined federal penitentiary.

"Khayden is too young to remember what happened, but there will come a day, maybe when he's a teenager, when he will ask why he can't move his hand or why his smile is crooked," said Otter.

"I don't know what I'll do when that day comes, but I know it'll be very hard on the whole family."

Otter went on to say that he and his family have chosen to forgive Spencer. Instead, they wish to put all their energy and prayers into helping Khayden get better.



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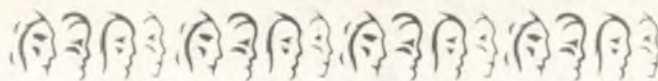


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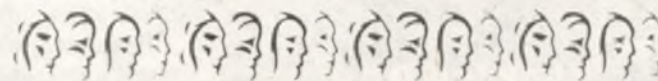
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Mistissini man gets six months for gun offense

A man who was arrested by police on New Year's Day and charged with careless use of a firearm was given a six-month suspended sentence in a Mistissini traveling court January 12.

At 7 am the morning of January 1, Mathew Swallow came out of his house in a drunken state waving a semi-automatic .22-calibre rifle, according to Mistissini's Police Chief Calvin Blacksmith.

Police apprehended him quickly before any damage could be done.

Luckily, the firearm had malfunctioned and no one was injured.

He received a light sentence, according to Blacksmith, because he has no previous convictions.

There was no apparent motive.

UN proclaims Indigenous Peoples' Decade... again

The United Nations has labeled the next 10 years as the second Decade of Indigenous Peoples after the first one apparently didn't live up to its promises.

In an announcement December 20, the UN General Assembly formally adopted the resolution that proclaimed the decade, which commenced January 1, 2005.

"A major goal of First Nations in Canada and Aboriginal peoples around the globe was to ratify the Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and have it entrenched as part of the UN Convention before the end of the Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples," said Assembly of First Nations' Chief Phil Fontaine.

"It is unfortunate that we are not yet able to celebrate this achievement,

but we believe this can and should be achieved early in the New Year. The next Decade of the World's Indigenous People should focus on implementing the rights of Indigenous peoples based on the principles of the Draft Declaration."

Fontaine went on to say that although the declaration is a step in the right direction, it must be implemented – soon.

"It is crucial to ensure the full recognition and exercise of First Nations rights as the way forward for Canada and First Nations," said Fontaine. "Self-determination is directly linked to a better quality of life for all our people and is essential to making real progress."

Pressure came from various Indigenous groups, government and non-governmental entities to ensure a second decade. It was approved without a vote.

Grand Council of the Crees spokesman Paul Joffe said however that a lot of progress was made in the past decade.

"When the Grand Council started going to the UN, a lot of the doors were closed," said Joffe. "Now a lot of the Cree issues are at the forefront and we're better represented internationally."

"The creation in the last decade of a permanent forum for Indigenous issues was a huge step forward for Native people, especially the Cree."

The first International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples was proclaimed by the General Assembly in resolution 48/163 on December 21, 1993. It expired last December 10.

The main objectives were to strengthen international cooperation for solutions to problems of Native peoples. Areas highlighted include human rights, education, and health.

It's hoped that the second decade will succeed in implementing new programs and providing aid to some of the poorest people in the world.

Native kids account for 1/3 of children in foster care

A report published in the Montreal Gazette earlier this month stated that Native kids account for one-third of all children in foster care in Canada.

The paper cites Indian Affairs documents as proof in estimating that 30 to 40 per cent of all kids in foster care are aboriginal.

According to documents prepared for Indian Affairs Minister Andy Scott and made available through the Access to Information Act, the paper found that First Nations Child and Family Services are "woefully under funded," despite an operating budget of \$400 million.



It says that the number of child and family service agencies has ballooned from 34 in 1990 to 102 last year.

By this estimate, there are over 8,000 status Native children in foster care at the present time.

Indian Affairs Minister Scott refrained from commenting on the issue, fearing his words would be seen by "colleagues and others as trying to achieve, theoretically, results through [the media] – and that doesn't ever improve your chances."

Assembly of First Nations leader Phil Fontaine said that a cap on program spending set in 1996 of two per cent per year for Indian Affairs was not realistic due to the exploding Native populations.

"Up until that point (in 1996) the gap was closing," he said. "Now it's the same or worse."

HUNTING IN THE 'GREY' ZONE

**Cree fined for
following game;
discovers strange
Grand Council policy**

BY STEVE BONSPIEL



Jimmy Cooper is beginning to wonder the meaning of being Cree in today's world after a Val d'Or Court ruling found him guilty of hunting south of the 49th parallel – even though he had signed an agreement with the farmer who owned the land he was hunting on.

Having grown up in the bush, Cooper says he has always hunted and lived the way a traditional Cree would. Until the day he was caught hunting in a "grey" area.

Under the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, the hunting territory is cut into three categories. The Northern area, Southern area, and something called a Buffer Zone. The incident occurred in the Buffer Zone.

But it's what followed that has mystified Cooper even further. He is disappointed with the reaction of the Grand Council of the Crees, which they would pay his fines – but only if he agreed to plead guilty. "It seems to me that the Grand Council has a policy of not going to court with Quebec since the Paix des Braves Agreement was signed," Cooper said.

The problem is that the territory in question has not been clearly defined as to who can hunt and fish there. It's a problem that was supposed to be rectified shortly after the JBNQA was signed, but is still in question.

"The Grand Council never told me about the definitions of where I could hunt as a Cree," Cooper fumed. "I think they could have handled my situation better. Why wasn't this issue put into one of their supplementary agreements a long time ago?"

Until very recently, he had to fight for his hunting rights without the help of the Grand Council. A letter written to the GCC and the Waswanipi Band Council, the lawyers representing the Grand Council make reference to their specific instructions from the GCC. The letter, signed August 19, 2004, by David Kalmakoff of the law firm of Hutchins, Grant and Associates, reads in part:

"...to continue to act on Mr. Cooper's behalf in this matter on the condition that Mr. Cooper would decide to render a plea of guilty and that counsel would seek a discharge so that Mr. Cooper might not have a criminal record in relation to this defense.

"I spoke to Mr. Cooper today and explained the situation to him. He informed me that having considered his position carefully he remains unwilling to plead guilty to the charge he faces and insists on raising his Aboriginal rights as a defense.

"I explained to him that as a result of the conflict between our mandate from the Cree Nation of Waswanipi and his instructions to us in this regard we, and Ms. Flavia Longo, would be withdrawing from acting as council for him and that unless he made other arrangements for himself he would be unrepresented in this matter. Mr. Cooper understood and plans to appear in court on Monday acting on his own behalf."

"The deal was that I would plead guilty and they would pay for my lawyer and whatever expenses required for that

case," said Cooper. "But I wanted to plead not guilty because why would I be guilty while practicing my traditional pursuits?"

According to Waswanipi Chief Robert Kitchen, however, the Grand Council has changed its position and is expected to discuss the issue in their Council Board meeting later this month.

Kitchen told *the Nation* that the Grand Council wants to use this as a test case and that it'll probably take years before a decision is rendered.

"There were previous cases where Crees fished in that area, but they paid the fine and that was it. With Jimmy's case, it'll take quite a bit of time and money to prove that we have rights to hunt and fish in that area and to settle our claims to that land," he said.

The issue is a very contentious one, and that may have been why the Grand Council did not want to tackle it head on.

"The Buffer Zone as well as other areas are in question right now," said Kitchen. "They are claimed by us as well as other nations like the Algonquins. We're hoping to define and come to an agreement with Quebec and the other nations on the land rights issue in the next few years so we'll know who is entitled to hunt in these areas."

Cooper said that there seems to be a double standard in regards to hunting in the province and he wants to get to the bottom of it. "If the white people can come up here and hunt in our territory, why can't we go down there and hunt as well?"

He also added that he will not be intimidated and let game wardens dictate his Cree rights. He will go goose hunting in the spring and hopes other Waswanipi residents who have

been scared to hunt in that area since his case came to light will follow.

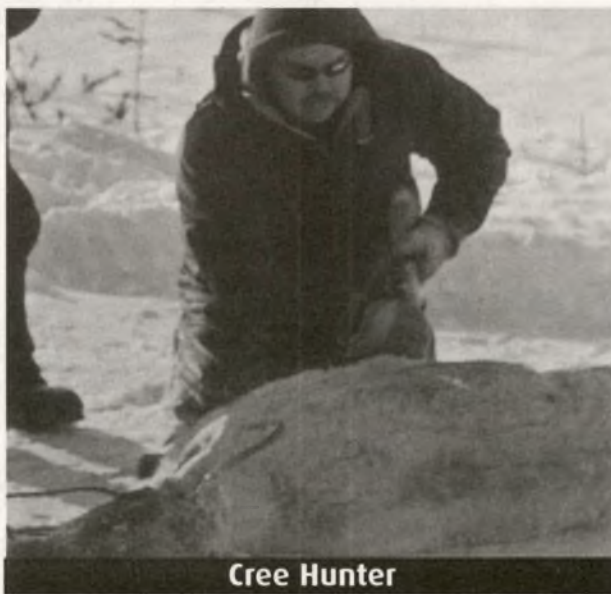
A few years back, Cooper started hunting outside of his usual grounds, "following the game" as he called it.

"Who goes hunting where there's no game?" he asked. "A hunter knows what he's doing, so I move where I need to, following the migratory birds."

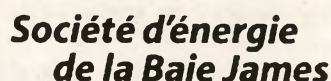
His generosity drove him to hunt a little extra, in order to give meat to elders and widows.

One of the newer areas included Vassan, near Amos. He never had any trouble using a farmer's field to hunt until that day on April 26th, 2002.

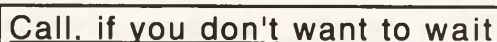
"I had made an agreement [Autorisation de Chasse et Pêche] with the farmer that I was going to use his field to hunt," Cooper recounted. "My son and I went out into his field and got into our boat. We didn't have a blind, just cam-



Cree Hunter



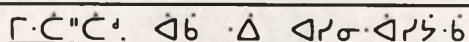
Over a 45-day period, Blais et Langlois will be transporting pieces of steel armouring from Matagami to the Eastmain-1 jobsite. This will considerably disrupt traffic from January, 17 2005 to March, 7 2005. About fifteen trips are planned, which could each take up to three days to complete. Each trip will be divided into two parts: from Matagami to Kilometre 274 (intersection with the Route du Nord) and, the following day, from Kilometre 407 to the Eastmain-1 jobsite. On the James Bay highway, the convoy will stop every 30 minutes, and/or as needed, to allow traffic through. However, from the Route du Nord to the Eastmain-1 jobsite, vehicles will not be able to pass the convoy. Hydro-Québec Security will be making sure that everything goes smoothly, several kilometres ahead of the convoy.



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Barbecue Meatball Subs

BBQ Sauce:

1 tsp	vegetable oil	5ml
1/4 cup	chopped onion	50ml
1/4 cup	chopped green pepper	50ml
1 can (7.5 oz)	tomato sauce	225ml
3 tbsp	ketchup	45ml
4 1/2 packets	sugar substitute	3.6g
2 tbsp	red wine vinegar	30ml
1/2 tsp	Worcestershire sauce	2ml
1/2 tsp	salt	2ml

1. Heat the vegetable oil in a medium-sized saucepan. Add chopped onion and green pepper then sauté just until tender (about 2 minutes).
2. Add the tomato sauce, ketchup, sugar substitute, vinegar, 1/2 tsp Worcestershire sauce and 1/2 tsp salt. Simmer uncovered for 15 minutes.

Meatballs:

1 lb	lean ground beef	454g
2 tbsp	dry breadcrumbs	30ml
2 tbsp	minced onion	30ml
1/2 tsp	salt	2ml
1/4 tsp	pepper	1ml
1/4 tsp	garlic powder	1ml
1/2 tsp	Worcestershire sauce	2ml
1	egg white	
6	small sub or hero buns	

1. In a medium-sized mixing bowl, combine the ground beef, breadcrumbs, onion, 1/2 tsp salt, 1/4 tsp pepper, garlic powder, 1/2 tsp Worcestershire sauce and the egg white. Mix well.
2. Using a heaping teaspoon for each, shape into 20 meatballs.
3. Spray a large skillet with vegetable oil spray and fry the meatballs until brown on all sides and cooked through.

To serve:

1. Cut the buns in half and put 4 meatballs on each bun.
2. Spoon the hot BBQ sauce over the meatballs and replace top half of bun. Makes 6 servings.

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION PER SERVING (ONE SANDWICH)

Carbohydrates: 39g, Proteins: 20g, Fats: 12g, Calories: 337



Northern

Cooper said that the only reason the Grand Council is even looking at the file is because he's taken such a hard

"But if we let go of the Cree world, we're lost in this society."

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Will On the Grill

by Will Nicholls

Every now and then you come across a gem in the culinary world. It's unusual to enjoy two jewels of Montreal's fine cuisine in the same day. At lunch it was the Trois Marie located at the corner of Mozart and Clark in the Little Italy district. Intimate and old world charm abounds at this reasonably priced restaurant. It's great for having a quiet meeting, business lunch, intimate dinner or even a family meal out. While the menu may seem small compared to other restaurants, the food is exceptional.

I then tried out a new restaurant, the Caves de Saint Joseph, located at St. Joseph and St. Laurent. This restaurant specializes in the fermented grapes of France. That is, they feature wine from all of France and divided into Southern, Central and Northern varieties. Instead of just looking at a wine list you can look at the wall. It shows what wines are on hand. If you need assistance or want a particular flavour the owner and host is always glad to assist you in a selection. I used him twice and was quite happy with the results. A word of warning, though: if you're a vegetarian, most of the dishes here are meat based. In fact, if you don't eat meat, you have exactly one choice on the menu, the "vegetarian plate."

The cooking is excellent and the kitchen is spic and span.

Recipes in this issue include a delicious marinade which goes well with caribou and many other meats. I got it from a chef after giving him some caribou to experiment on.

The Finnish recipe was on from when Neil Diamond, Richard Lawson and I went down to New Hampshire for American Thanksgiving. It's actually bigger than Christmas for the Americans. The food was great and everyone brought something. Over the next few months I'll be sharing some of those family recipes with you.

Lanttulaatikko-Rutabaga Casserole (an old recipe from Finland)

This recipe is the exact one used in the American Thanksgiving meal. It is great tasting and very healthy.

- 2 1/2 cups boiled, mashed rutabaga (turnip)
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper, or more to taste
- 1 1/2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 1/4 cup soft bread crumbs

Combine all ingredients except 1/4 cup bread crumbs.

Put into an oiled casserole dish.

Top with the remaining crumbs. Bake at 350 degrees F. for 30 minutes or until brown on top. Yield: 6 servings

A comment from Louise, the cook: "I always double or triple this recipe as everyone seems to like it -- even those who don't like rutabaga! Also I use a bit more bread crumbs than the recipe calls for."

Caribou Marinade

Remember this can be used for most other meats.

- 1/4 cup plain yogurt
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- juice of 1/2 lemon
- 2 teaspoons cumin
- 1 tablespoon paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 1 tablespoon minced ginger
- Optional: 1 teaspoon fenugreek
- Optional: 1 teaspoon cardamom

Marinate overnight and then cook on a grill.

When serving add a slice of lemon or lime.

continued on page 26





CREE NATION OF NEMASKA

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Quiet Christmas in the communities

by Norman Fireman

Police forces throughout Eeyou Istchee reported a relatively quiet holiday period this year, with only one gun offense and a lower-than-usual level of disturbances.

"It wasn't as bad as it was in the past," said Chisasibi police spokesperson Lyle Cox. "We didn't have many calls to respond to this time. People were behaving and it was very quiet during the holidays."

Mistissini, by contrast, did experience a number of assault complaints – including one sexual assault – over the New Year's celebrations. Police Chief Calvin Blacksmith said 17 files were opened January 1. There was also one firearm offense, though no one was injured or threatened in the incident. Blacksmith blames booze for the trouble. "I want to say to everyone pay more attention to your families and alcohol is not the solution," he said.

In Eastmain, however, Willie Gunner said not a single new file was opened. "We organize a New Years celebration like the one held in Mistissini every Christmas. This is what

kept the people busy."

All quiet in Wemindji, as well, reports Elmer Georgekish. "Everybody enjoyed his or her time and nothing serious happened. We basically just received calls from people having too many parties, just the routine where there were too many people in the house and we had to get them out, dispersed everybody, nothing major."

Community involvement was also the answer in Wapmagoostui, says Roger Sandy. "We organized a Christmas Festival, which kept everyone very busy. Not even one call was received at the station. Everyone was so happy even the police were participating in the games with their uniforms and socializing with the people. It was great to see that for a change. So I recommend all communities to do the same during the holidays you will see a big change."

Joe Saganash in Waswanipi said his community had a quieter holiday than in the past. "Just a few files opened," he said. "Mischief and assault but nothing serious."

Waskaganish experienced a few alcohol-fueled fistfights, says Jimmy Hester. "Mostly it was a breach of peace where somebody gets into a fight and we have to detain that person in detention for a few hours to sober him up. Basically that's what happened from 26th –27th. On New Year's Day 22 files were opened, it was a very busy day; we received call after call on that day, mostly mischief, arrest for breach of peace, threats, assault on a police officer and impaired driving."

Meanwhile, George Gunner in Ouje-Bougoumou said his community was quiet also. "During Christmas no files were opened," Gunner said. "But on New Year's Day there was one attempted suicide, alcohol related. I would like to say to all the police officers in Eeyou Istchee I know it's not easy what we try to do, we took these jobs to do them and we're doing the best we can. We would like to thank the people of Ouje-Bougoumou for respecting what were trying to do and it's not easy."



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I Remember, Part 1: October of 1998

My name is Louis Neacappo. My official papers say my name is Louis J.G. Neacappo. As a coach, I'm known as the Basketball Emperor. But before I was in a wheelchair, back in the days when I was terrorizing the gymnasiums of other communities, they called me Big Bird!

Just this past tournament, a six-foot-tall 17-year-old guy from another community, Mistissini I believe it was, came up to me outside the gymnasium and said: "You're the Big Bird! I used to watch you play when I was little!" As he said this, he put his hand somewhere below his waist, indicating how little he used to be. Later that very day, another *mandow* (out-of-towner), not much older than the first, said something else: "I remember you! You were good! You were mean!"

The gift those two youngsters gave me that day was the feeling of having left my mark somewhere. Could it be that I had inspired them to be just that much more of a basketball player? The mere fact that I could ask myself that question was good enough for me. For a brief and precious moment in time, I wasn't a cripple, I was Big Bird again! I was the guy that came to your town and crashed the living hell out of your boards! I was the guy that let you know how bad you were losing as Storm lit up the scoreboard! I was the villain they would boo in Eastmain! I was the man, but not anymore. Thank you guys, whoever you were.

Chisasibi's annual basketball tournament isn't just a weekend to me. It's a religious observance that honours four boys lost to us. Patrick "Boy" Neacappo, Theodore Sam, Frederick Shem and Tommy Tapiatic were only



Louis Neacappo on computer with Paul Pechano

boys; boys on the verge of manhood. I coached Theodore, Frederick and Boy in the last tournament they would ever play. It was in Mistissini.

Originally, I wasn't supposed to coach their team. I was going to coach another Chisasibi team competing in another division. I simply happened to walk in during those boys' first game. They were starting to lose badly, but only because they were intimidated. They were trying all wrong, if you'll pardon the expression. I had to step in.

They were down by a good 15 points when I walked over to their bench and called a time-out. The refs working the game knew I coached other teams, so they must have assumed I was also the boys' team coach, thus granting me the time-out. I quickly gathered them and said the following: "Never mind the score. You came here to play basketball the same way you go to open gym in Chisasibi to play ball. There's no difference. When you go back out there, I want you to

play like when we scrimmage back home. Don't be afraid to try something or push someone out of the way under the basket." This particular speech struck hard and instantaneously. I knew I had said the right thing.

As the game progressed, lo and behold, the Chisasibi boys mounted a comeback. They started playing with smiles on their faces. "Boy" dribbled the ball behind his back to get by his defender, and as he passed the ball off to an open teammate, he said: "Ne-Mama-chee-tin!" Which of course means: "I'm a fancy dude!"

Theodore battled a kid far taller than he was and was out-rebounding him. On two occasions he boxed his bigger opponent and put back missed shots to keep the game tied. Frederick's skills at the time were not spectacular, but I found times and places for him to play. His charming smile glowed like no other when he eventually scored a basket a few games later.

But for now let's get back to the

continued from page 21

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comeback. At the end of the game, the boys had lost by no more than three or four points, having actually held the lead very briefly. I don't think they won a single game, but I do remember them following me around Mistissini all weekend. I felt I had done well in stepping in as their coach. And they made me feel like a wanted mentor.

Sadly, they would not make it back to Chisasibi. The road would claim their lives on the way home. I was driving back to Chisasibi in another vehicle following a different road. I was with Chisasibi's second men's team, whom I'd also coached that weekend. There was no way for me to know what had happened.

When we got to km 381 at the Eastmain gas bar, one of my players, Raymond Spencer, called home to check in. It was night, and the crash had already occurred earlier that day. When he got off the phone with his mother, he proceeded to tell the rest of us that there had been a crash and that we had lost two boys: Theodore and "Boy".

As we gathered our devastated selves and prepared for quite possibly the longest drive home ever, I looked upon my wrist that was resting on the steering wheel and saw that I was wearing Theodore's watch. He had given it to me before one of their games. When I had offered it back to him after the game, he told me to hold on to it for a while longer. I was trapped in that moment in time the entire drive home to Chisasibi. "Keep it," he had said. "Hold on to it for me."

I drove no faster than 70 km/hr from the km 381 gas bar to Chisasibi. In order to avoid a dreadful silence in the vehicle, I played the only non-violent music we had on hand, my Tom Cochrane cd. We slowly drove down the road, wiping away tears that would only get bigger when we would reach home and be embraced by our loved ones.

You see, at first the town of Chisasibi didn't know which vehicle had crashed, only that there was a

Chisasibi vehicle involved in an accident that resulted in casualties. For an undetermined amount of time, the entire town was waiting to hear names. Parents and families were praying and bracing themselves for the worst possible news; that their own had not made it.

Uncertain grief was in Chisasibi. Grief that a son might have died. The relief folks must have felt at the news that their son, brother or friend had survived (or hadn't even been involved in the accident) would have changed into something terrible. "He's alive, thank God," must have been replaced by selfish guilt for theirs' being spared, and others' not.

We buried Boy and Theodore together in the same plot, with a basketball between their coffins. We took turns filling in the earth, and soon only the basketball was visible. I knew I could have finished covering it, but I couldn't. My friend Clavin House did it for me. He too had been their coach in previous tournaments.

Later that week, Frederick was taken off life support, which he had been on since the accident. His injuries were irreparable. I sincerely wish I could have been there to lay him to rest also, but by this time, I was drinking and smoking drugs at a destructive pace.

Only a few weeks later, during the liquor and marijuana purging of my body, I got in a party vehicle headed for Radisson on an early morning beer run. Everybody was already drunk, including the driver, my good friend Tommy Tapiatic.

I had coached him a few years earlier when he was still playing for the boys' team The Hurricanes. I can remember Chisasibi's first-ever basketball tournament in 1995 when Tommy was playing for me. Back then, he had not yet had his growth spurt, but he had shown potential as a shooter. I would always make sure he was on the floor for the final minutes of every half, because of his shooting ability.

One time there was maybe 10

seconds left in a game we were comfortably winning. Tommy knew there was little time left, so when he caught the ball at near half-court, he turned and heaved a beautiful and technically sound shot from at least five feet behind what would have been an NBA 3-pointer. I knew there was still time to get a closer and better shot, so as Tommy let the ball fly out of his hands, I yelled out: "Tommy! No!" Right away he felt bad for shooting from so far and put his head down. But then to my utter amazement, the ball arced high and went through the hoop with a resounding "swish," popping the mesh upwards, which is what a perfectly centred ball through the hoop does. The entire Hurricanes bench laughed and cheered as I sheepishly threw my hands in the air and sat down with a big smile on my face.

On the way back home from the big R with Tommy, replenished with beer and drinking it all the while, our Suburban went off the road. Tommy lost his life and I woke up in a strange hospital, surrounded by machines. I had tubes going in and out of me all over. I wasn't even able to move; my legs would not respond and my hands were tied to the bed. I wasn't even able to breathe for myself. A machine was pumping oxygen in and out of my collapsed lungs through a hole in the front of my neck.

All I knew at this point in time was that I had to live. The sacrifices made by Theodore, "Boy," Frederick and Tommy gave me the strength not to quit. To tell you the truth, as saddened as I was that I would never walk again and that the rest of my life would be a complicated mess of emotions and situations, in spite of all the misery in store for me I felt lucky. And happy to be alive!

Thank you Theodore. Thank you "Boy". Thank you Frederick. Thank you Tommy. When I get there, wherever you are, we five got next game on the Big Court, 'cause I really miss playing basketball!

Louis Neacappo

**CREE NATION OF MISTISSINI**

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Job Opportunity

JOB TITLE: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (PERMANENT POSITION)**CORE FUNCTIONS:**

UNDER THE GENERAL DIRECTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CREE NATION OF MISTISSINI, BUT MORE SPECIFICALLY UNDER THE DIRECTOR GENERAL, THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE OVERALL PLANNING, DIRECTION, COORDINATION AND PROMOTION OF ALL THE COMMUNITY-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS FOR MISTISSINI. HE/SHE SHALL ENSURE THE PROPER COORDINATION AND DIRECTION OF THE FOLLOWING PERSONNEL AND PROGRAMS UNDER HIS/HER SUPERVISION:

- 1) COORDINATOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- 2) LOCAL ENVIRONMENT ADMINISTRATOR
- 3) LOCAL LAND REGISTRAR
- 4) ARENA SUPERVISOR
- 5) LOCAL HARVESTING COORDINATOR
- 6) TOURISM PLANNER
- 7) PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICER

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ABILITY TO WORK AS PART OF A TEAM AND WITH MINIMAL SUPERVISION;

MUST HAVE STRONG WRITING AND RESEARCH SKILLS;

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ALL SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS SHOULD BE PROVIDED WITH APPLICATIONS INCLUDING SCHOOL TRANSCRIPTS AND DIPLOMAS AND TWO REFERENCE LETTERS. ANY FAILURE TO DO SO WILL RESULT IN THE LOSS OF POINTS.

APPLICATIONS TO BE FORWARD TO:

**CREE NATION OF MISTISSINI
ATT: HATTIE SHECAPIO
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MISTISSINI, QUEBEC
G0W 1C0**

Imagine all the people

by Xavier Kataquapit

I spent the better part of the holiday season with a shovel in hand moving large piles of snow from the driveway. Whenever I thought my work was done, the municipal plow piled more snow at the end of the driveway for me to clear. The first day or two did not seem bad but after about two weeks of continually shovelling snow I started to complain about winter weather, the cold and the frustration of living in the north.

I had to take a step back and consider how lucky and fortunate I was to live in this part of the world when I saw the devastation that took place on December 26, 2004. At first I was surprised to see the news coverage of the earthquake and tsunami that affected the countries around the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea. I think many people were merely intrigued with this story at first because no one knew the extent of the damage in the beginning. As the images and videos of the event were played out on the newscasts on television and video streams on the internet we all began to realize the extent of the damage and destruction that took place. I was shocked by the number of people that were victims of this freak of nature.

I was also alarmed at the fact that towns I had visited in Thailand in 1999 had been destroyed. During the month of February that year I travelled with a friend of mine to the southern part of the country and visited several areas including the island of Phuket. At one point during our travels we stayed for a week in a bungalow in Patong not far from the beach. Patong beach was one of the worst hit areas in Thailand. The tsunami took the lives of many local Thai as well as tourists from several countries. Southern Thailand is one of the most beautiful places in the world, which is why people from all over are drawn to this destination. The beaches are long, wide and the water in many places is turquoise and clear.

This tragedy made me think. We have snow every year and we have to deal with icy roads and cold weather. While I shovelled one day, I talked to a neighbour who was also working on his driveway. He explained that the snow was hard to deal with but at least we don't have to deal with situations like the tsunami in southern Asia. I really realize now how lucky we are to live in a country like Canada, where we enjoy a great amount of wealth and prosperity as well as the fact that the majority of people are not in danger of catastrophic events like tsunamis, hurricanes or earthquakes. Most of the people in our country live in great comfort compared to the rest of the world. I once read that when a teenager in Canada or the United States receives his or her first job at minimum wage, they step into the top 10 percent or so of the wealthiest people in the world.

Even in First Nation communities where things are not always easy, life is still better than many other parts of the world. Unfortunately, there are situations in many Native

communities in Canada where life comes close to Third World conditions. I understand this because I have experienced both worlds. There are many events and circumstances that occur in Native communities that would not be acceptable in southern non-Native cities or towns. In my visits to Third World countries I was reminded that life in some ways resembles the scene in First Nation communities in Canada. In a way First Nation people have much in common with a major part of this planet that lives in what we call third world conditions.

With this in mind any of us that can afford to should dig into our own pockets and send a donation to one of the many relief organizations. The Red Cross comes to mind. Even though this was a terrible event, there seems to be a great sense of hope and solidarity as the world pitches in to help those in need. It is just a shame that tragedies such as this have to take place in order for us to realize how much we all care about and depend on each other. Perhaps this will be one of those special moments in time and history where we turn a corner and keep on with a more loving and giving way of living together.

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CLASSIFIEDS

BIRTHS - 100

I would like to congratulate my sister Laura Wapachee and her boyfriend Joshua Gray on the safe arrival of our bundle of joy "Alayna Siya Gray" born on the 29th of December, 2004 in Chibougamau. I'm so happy for you two, enjoy every minute with your baby girl. I hope you come to Nemaska soon, like very soon, lol. Anyways, Congrats! and may God bless you all. Love: Brenda-Rose and Girls (Valerie, Patricia & Baby)

BIRTHDAYS - 101

Wanna wish my cousin Carrie-Ann "Happy 10th B-day!" on Jan.6th. And to my ooh-hoom Rene Happy 40th B-day on Jan. 20th. Luv u both so much. Fr TJ

Happy 1st Birthday to my one and only nephew, Landon Myles Shawn Wapachee on January 13th, 2005. I'm sure you'll have a blast on your special day, especially when you finally get a chance to eat that icing on your Birthday cake. Happy Birthday Landon Boy! Love Always, Auntie Brenda Rose & Girls (Valerie, Patricia & Baby) XOXOXOXO

Birthday Greetings going out to my lovely mother Emma Wapachee on the 15th of January, 2005. I would like to take this time to tell you how much you are loved and cared for. May God bless you with many more birthdays ahead...Thank you for everything! Mom. Love: Your daughter Brenda-

Rose and Grand daughters (Valerie, Patricia & Baby)

We would like to say happy 2nd birthday to our godson Trevon John Antoine on Jan.8.05.Can't wait to watch you open your presents and blowing those 2 candles. We love you, From:your god parents Romeo and Stephanie Ottereyes and our 2 beautiful daughters Toronna and Lianne.

We want to tell you how much joy and happiness you brought into our lives and we love you very much. Enjoy your special day as special as you are. From mom and dad and your little sis Lianne xoxox

We would also wish happy birthday to these people, first to Amelia Otter on Jan.6 and to Laurianne Happyjack on Jan.12. From us, Toronna and Lianne

A very Happy Birthday to my sweet little Keona of mine. She turned 3 on December 31. I will never forget the day you were born, surely one of the best days in my life. "you are daddy's little girl," here is one of my fav pictures of you and daddy. I love you so very much, Happy Birthday. love mommy, daddy and your little bro Konrad Simard xoxo Be good to Konrad!!!

I would like to wish a Happy Birthday to Allison Sam on January 17-2005. Happy 15th Birthday Allison! Take care of yourself on your birthday! From: your friend/cousin Alice in Chisasibi.

We'd like to wish Goo Goom, Minnie Matches, O.T. Frank Atsynia, and Jaymekins Atsynia,

Happy Birthdays to ya'll in the month of January. Jayme on the 5th, Goo Goo - Hot Chick on the 6th and O.T. on the 14th. With Love Lor and J.T.

Birthday wishes to Merle Linklater on the 13th and to April Linklater on the 26th of January.

Happy Birthday and many more to come.Hugs and Kisses from Josiah Thomas

Lorna Nurna Jane, my buddie'sh, ... lol "Eh! JFK Nur wink! wink!" Will be celebrating her Birthday on January 16th. It will be the BIG 20! Wow 20 beeping years old, eh! I know you told me awhile back not to do this but, you know I never listen. Oh, don't party, seriously! We will wait 'til my B-day to party (on you) lol joshin'. Hope you like your present, couldn't find the vibrating thingie u wanted. Kidding! Just Kidding. Happy Birthday, Babe. Love Lora-dee and J.T. sends his love. Toodles.

I would like to wish a Happy Birthday to my cousin Dustin Martinhunter on January 19 2005. I hope u have a great time and have a lot of fun cause u deserve it and don't eat to much of your birthday cake ..lol, from your little cuz Ayden Martinhunter Loon Mist.

Happy 15th Birthday to my sister Edna-Rose Matthew on Feb.03. Thank you for being there when I need you

and I want you to know that I'm always here for you too. Have a great one...you don't have to drink to have a good time. Love from your sister Alice.

Wishing our son/brother Tyson-John Loon a very happy 2nd birthday on January 26. May you have a wonderful day and many more. Once again Happy Birthday. Love From: Mom & Dad (Alice & Joe) and your baby sister Alyssa-Jolynn.

I would like to wish a happy 2nd birthday to my niece Haylianna Nine O'Clock on January 13,2005. So you're turning 2...you're growing up so fast baby gurl...and to my nephew

Derian Mistacheesick on January 22,2005. Happy Birthday to you and many more to come. Hope u have fun on ur special Days love always, Stella xoxoxo (Chisasibi).

I would like to wish birthday greetings to my cousins Carrie-ann Herodier January 6...happy 10th birthday I'm your boss right ?...lol , Haylianna Nine o'Clock January 13...happy 2nd birthday Haylie Derian Mistacheesick on January 22...and to Angie Scipio-herodier on January 24, 2005. Happy Birthday and many more to come to you all...have fun on ur birthday's....love Always Darcy Sealhunter-Herodier (Tucker)xoxoxox

We would like to wish a Happy 2nd Birthday to a very special, girl my niece/cousin Haylianna Nine O'clock (Haylie'shgo) on January 13,2005. Happy Birthday girl, hope you'll have



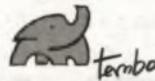
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fun on your special day. I can't wait to see u blowing out your 2 candles. Enjoy your birthday party and have fun. Once again Happy 2nd Birthday and many more birthdays to come. We Love u so much. Hugs n' kisses. With Love from your auntie Edith and cousin Derian (Chisasibi).

I would like to wish a Happy 4th Birthday to the most important person in my life, my son whom I love so much his name is Derian Mistacheesick, his birthday will be on January 22, 2005. Seems like yesterday u were born, now you'll be turning 4, soon you'll start your first year of school. Enjoy your special day and hope you have fun. I Love you sooo much, with all my heart. Hugs n' kisses to you my son. Once again Happy 4th Birthday and many more to come. With Love from your mommy, Edith (Chisasibi).

I would like to say Happy belated Birthday to Vanessa Longchap on January 5, 2005. Happy Birthday Girl! Take care of yourself, From A Girl You Know PS. I MISS YOU:(

We would like to say Happy 15th Birthday to our friend Vanessa Longchap on January 5, 2005, from your friends:D.

I would like to say Happy 16th Birthday to Victoria Longchap on January 12, 2005. Happy Birthday Girl and take care of yourself on your Birthday. And Happy 18th Birthday to Harry Napash on January 13, 2005. Happy Birthday Sexy;). From a Girl In Chis. PS. Don't party too much on Ur Birthday Guys.....JK.

Wishing a very Happy 8th Birthday to my niece Alexis Mark, who is attending school in Hull, Qc. Enjoy your day lil' girl, I love you and miss you a lot. From Auntie Priscilla Mark.

My pride and my joy SKY MATOUSH will be turning 6 on January 17th. Happy Birthday My Girl! You are my sunshine on a rainy day, You brought me the greatest joy in every way, Thank You for showing me who I really am, And showing you that I can, You are my gift from up above, You filled my life with so much LOVE. Rachel.

I just want to say Happy Birthday to Perren Hester on January 16-2005. Don't drink to much when you're in Matagami...Jk. Do what ever you want it's your day:D.

WEDDINGS - 102

Congratulations to my friend, Anita Kitty and her boyfriend Brad Iserhoff on their engagement. Hey Anita! Guess Santa was good to you eh? He actually brought you a diamond to shine on your finger, lol. Once again, Congratulations to you both and may your days be filled with lots of love. From both of us in Wask; (Tanya & Al)

PERSONAL - 300

I would like to wish my wonderful auntie Maggie Minister in Montreal a Happy New Year and I wish her the best and good health. I hope I can come to Montreal and visit you soon. Take care Auntie! With love and prayers: Brenda-Rose

I want to wish my beautiful family a "Happy New Year" I LOVE YOU! From: Isabelle

For SALE in Val d'Or, 2 buildings with 4 apartments each, located near university-cegep. One building has a semi-detached house with three 4 1/2 apartments. Don't miss the chance to own the place. Good renting opportunity. Contact Michel at 819 824-6738.

continued from page 15

Will On the Grill

Nested Eggs

This is an interesting little recipe for leftover mashed potatoes. I know I usually have some and this recipe is break-fast for two people.

- 1 cup mashed potatoes
- 1/3 cup grated cheddar cheese
- 1 large egg beaten
- 1 tablespoon bacon bits
- 1/2 teaspoon parsley
- 1/4 teaspoon onion powder
- 2 large eggs
- dash paprika
- dash salt
- dash pepper

Take first the six ingredients and mix. Divide in two. Make each into a ball. Flatten in a cookie pan. Make into a nest with a depression that can hold a large egg.

Crack eggs and put into depressions. Add paprika, salt and pepper.

Bake at 325 degrees for 15-20 minutes. Accept her marriage proposal because you are such a good cook.

Uses for Cola soda pop

This can be Coca-Cola, Pepsi or the no-name variety. We've all heard the stories on how a tooth will disappear when left in a glass of Coke for a week or so. So it seems to me that there must be a great many uses for this product besides drinking it. Here are some.

Remove rust spots from chrome car bumpers. Rubbing the bumper with a crumpled-up piece of aluminum foil dipped in Coca-Cola will help remove rust spots.

Loosen a rusted bolt. Apply a cloth soaked in a carbonated soda to the rusted bolt for several minutes. I've never tried this one so I can't say if it works.

Clean corrosion from car battery terminals. Pour a can of carbonated Coca-Cola over the terminals to bubble away the corrosion. Sounds like fun but make sure you don't let the liquid make contact with both terminals at once!

Remove grease from clothes. Empty a can of Coke into a load of greasy work clothes, add detergent, and run through a regular wash cycle. The Coca-Cola will help loosen grease stains.

Clean a toilet bowl. Pour a can of Coca-Cola into the toilet bowl. Let the "real thing" sit for one hour, then brush and flush clean. The citric acid in Coke removes stains from vitreous china.

Cook with Coca-Cola.

The Coca-Cola company heritage section offers a free recipes such as:

- Thick Barbecue Sauce
- 2 medium onions
- 3/4 cup Coca-Cola
- 3/4 cup ketchup
- 2 tablespoons vinegar
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon chili powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

Shred or blender-chop onions. Combine all ingredients.

Bring to a boil; cover pan; reduce heat and simmer about 45 minutes until sauce is very thick. Stir occasionally. Makes about 2 cups.

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